

*Supply—Northern Affairs*

this question of power policy. This is not an easy matter and I cannot tell the committee within a month or even within years when we can come to some definite conclusion. It is a vast subject, and all I can offer in my defence is that we are at least starting on the problem.

**Mr. Hardie:** I realize that the minister after listening to a good many speeches made on Saturday and today with regard to northern development has answered a good many of these questions and cannot deal with them all in a moment or two. However, I wonder if he would go back to the speech I made on Saturday and to his own speech where he said: I will come back to the actual details of the Garry lake incident in a moment. In the remainder of his speech he did not say anything about the details as he had promised to do and I am wondering if he could now give us some details on the episode at Garry lake last winter, particularly in regard to whether the department was warned of any crisis that might happen; if he could tell us how much food was dropped off on December 15; and the number of times Eskimos were contacted, say, by the northern service officer at Baker Lake, between August 16 of last year and April 4 of this year. I wonder if he could say something in regard to the reports which were made, no doubt, from time to time by his officers in the field to head office regarding this episode. I hope the minister can answer these questions, as he indicated he would.

**Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle):** Two questions were raised by the hon. member for Mackenzie River which I did not answer because he was out of the committee at that time. The first question was the one he directed to the Secretary of State. We are working very hard and we have an eight page, single lined statement which gives the information. I am not going to table it but I will provide it for the hon. member's own personal use. He will find there the most complicated mix-up he has ever seen, but the committee is more and more optimistic that they can get it straightened out and come closer together. Not only are there differences between departments but there are differences within departments, the women differing on the furniture and so on. I hope the hon. member takes this home with him and examines it, and I hope that by the time he comes back we will have had the regulations changed.

With regard to Garry lake, this cache at Garry lake was not in the full sense of the word an official government cache. Due to a certain commercial operation in the area by one of the companies there was a surplus of food which they did not want to bring

[Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle).]

back to southern Canada and this was turned over to the department. The department then put it in a cache at Garry lake under the supervision of the local mission, and it was kept in this little mission.

**Mr. Hardie:** On what date was this cache turned over?

**Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle):** I have no recollection, and I do not think anybody in the department knows. It was an unofficial act and we have no information at Ottawa as to the amount of food which was in that cache. We would have to go back and contact the company and ask them how much they gave us.

Since it is not the policy of the department to leave unsupervised caches, this cache was under the control of the local missionary, who does not spend all his time in that mission, and for a period of time the Eskimos moved in, at the time they were hungry, and took what they wanted. As members of the committee know, there was a fire due to the upsetting of a gasoline stove, and the mission and the stores were destroyed.

This brings up the question of the patrols. We have one northern service officer in this whole district, and he operates out of Baker Lake. When the weather is reasonable he moves around as well as he can using his own plane for which we provide gas and oil. He tries to make these calls, but there was a period when he did not visit Garry lake and when the missionary was not around—the missionary also informs us of cases of need—and during this period the fire took place and starvation occurred. I gave on Saturday a list of six things which we are doing to try to stop this type of thing ever happening again, but I said quite honestly I did not think I could give any full-out guarantee.

**Mr. Hardie:** That does not answer the question. The question I asked was how much food was left at Garry lake or Pelley lake on September 18, the last time the Eskimos were contacted, until March 22. My original question was this: was the department warned that conditions at Garry lake were such that we might expect to encounter such a situation as they did in fact encounter a few months ago.

**Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle):** Mr. Chairman, I have already explained to the committee that we have no information concerning the amount of food put into the cache. Since the hon. member asked the question, of course, we have inquired through the local officers up there.

**Mr. Hardie:** Did the department receive no warning that this might happen?